

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 SAJ-01 NIC-01 IO-10 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01

OMB-01 AGR-05 CU-02 STR-01 /107 W

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R 201925Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 571

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 5423

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOR, US, UR, GE, GW

SUBJECT : COURTESY CALL BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV

SUMMARY: DURING COURTESY CALL ON MARCH 19 SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV SOUGHT TO ENGAGE AMBASSADOR COOPER IN A DISCUSSION OF BERLIN MATTERS AND FRG VIOLATIONS OF THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT. HE WAS POLITELY BUT FIRMLY REBUFFED. ABRASIMOV ALSO ENCOURAGED THE U.S. TO DEVELOP AND NORMALIZE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE GDR. END SUMMARY

1. PYOTR ABRASIMOV, NEWLY-ARRIVED SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR, ON MARCH 19 CALLED ON ME AT THE EMBASSY. FELIX BLOCH, ACTING DCM, SAT WITH ME DURING THE MEETING.

2. ABRASIMOV REMARKED THAT HE WAS MAKING ONE OF HIS FIRST CALLS AT THE U.S. EMBASSY BECAUSE OF THE  
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IMPORTANT AND GOOD TIES THAT WERE DEVELOPING BETWEEN

OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE COMMENTED, IN JEST, THAT I WAS MORE AN EXPERT IN GDR AFFAIRS THAN HE, SINCE I HAD PRECEDED HIM IN BERLIN BY THREE MONTHS. LATER, HOWEVER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED, IN AN OPEN MANNER, HIS FAMILIARITY WITH THE LOCAL SCENE, SINCE HE HAD PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN BERLIN FOR NINE YEARS. I WELCOMED HIM, SAYING THAT I THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT WE MEET OFTEN AND DISCUSS FRANKLY AND OPENLY ANY PROBLEMS THAT EXISTED BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, AS I STRONGLY BELIEVED THAT DETENTE IS A CENTRAL ISSUE IN THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR RELATIONS AND PEACE. HE NODDED IN AGREEMENT.

3. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE OPENING COURTESIES, ABRASIMOV REFERRED TO THE FRG, ASCRIBING TO IT THE ROLE OF BETE NOIR IN US/USSR RELATIONS. HE NOTED THAT WEST BERLIN IS STILL A SOURCE OF DIFFICULTY, THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT NOTWITHSTANDING, DUE TO "PINPRICKS" BY THE FRG WHICH WERE IN VIOLATION OF THE STATUS OF THE STATUS OF THE CITY AS CONFIRMED IN THE QA. ABRASIMOV SAID THERE HAD BEEN HONEST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIM AND AMBASSADORS RUSH, JACKLING AND SAUVAGNARGUES IN NEGOTIATING THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT BUT THAT THESE HAD BEEN RESOLVED. THERE WAS NO REASON NOW TO PERMIT THE FRG TO CAUSE PROBLEMS BY EXCEEDING WHAT WAS PERMITTED BY THE AGREEMENT. TURNING TO BILATERAL US/GDR RELATIONS, ABRASIMOV SAID THAT THE U.S. SHOULD NOT BE GUIDED BY THE WISHES OF THE FRG BUT SHOULD DEVELOP AND NORMALIZE RELATIONS IN THE CONSULAR, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC AREAS.

4. I RESPONDED THAT I AND THE U.S. EMBASSY TO THE GDR ARE RESPONSIBLE SOLELY TO THE PRESIDENT AND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AND TO NO OTHER COUNTRY OR AUTHORITIES. I NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT OUR POLICIES MUST BE UNDERSTOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR DIFFERING COMMITMENTS, ADDING THAT MY PURPOSE IN BERLIN, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM MY GOVERNMENT, IS TO ACHIEVE GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GDR AND TO ASSIST AS BEST I CAN IN THE FURTHERANCE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND

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UNITED STATES AND THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF DETENTE.

5. ABRASIMOV CONTINUED ON THE SUBJECT OF "WEST BERLIN", SAYING THAT HE FELT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE TWO OF US TO TALK ABOUT MATTERS AFFECTING THAT CITY. HE REMARKED RATHER CRYPTICALLY THAT HE AND I COULD DISCUSS SUCH MATTERS IN BERLIN AND THAT AMBASSADORS

HILLENBRAND AND FALIN COULD DISCUSS THEM IN BONN. HE ADDED, IN A LIGHT VEIN, THAT AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME IN BERLIN AS A "GUEST" AND THAT HE WANTED TO RECIPROCATATE A LUNCHEON AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND HAD GIVEN IN HIS HONOR IN WASHINGTON. I RESPONDED FIRMLY TO HIS PROBE, SAYING THAT, WHILE I WAS GENERALLY FAMILIAR, BUT NOT IN DETAIL, WITH SOME DISAGREEMENTS REGARDING THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QA, I WANTED HIM TO UNDERSTAND CLEARLY, AS HE VERY WELL KNEW, THAT I HAD NO JURISDICTION OR AUTHORITY WHATSOEVER, FOR THE DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS AFFECTING THE QA AND THE STATUS OF BERLIN.

6. LATER, TOWARDS THE END OF THE CONVERSATION, ABRASIMOV NOTED A SIMILARITY IN OUR CAREERS, SAYING THAT WE HAD BOTH BEEN IN POLITICAL LIFE, HE AS A MEMBER OF THE SUPREME SOVIET AND THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND FOR THE PAST 17 YEARS IN DIPLOMATIC CAPACITIES. HE ALSO REMARKED THAT WE SHARED A WORLD WAR II MILITARY EXPERIENCE ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN WOUNDED TWICE. IT CAME TO MY MIND THAT HE WAS SUGGESTING THAT OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE WOULD BE HELPFUL IN OUR COMMUNICATIONS. AGAIN, I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT IT MIGHT BE A SUBTLE REFERENCE TO TALKS ABOUT WEST BERLIN.

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

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R 201825Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0572

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION US BERLIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BERLIN 5423

7. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION OF MR. BLOCH, ABRASIMOV  
SAID THAT MUCH HAD CHANGED IN HIS ABSENCE OF ABOUT

THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS FROM BERLIN. HE CITED THE  
TRIPLING OF THE NUMBER OF EMBASSIES IN BERLIN, THE 118  
COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS  
WITH THE GDR, AND THE FACT THAT THE GDR IS A UN MEMBER.  
REFERRING TO THE MODEST AMOUNT OF US/GDR TRADE, ABRASIMOV  
SAID GDR/USSR TRADE IN 1974 AMOUNTED TO 4 BILLION RUBLES.  
HE ADDED THAT THIS FIGURE REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT  
INCREASE OVER THE LEVEL OF THREE YEARS AGO. FINALLY, HE  
NOTED THAT THE GDR HAS CONSISTENTLY FULFILLED AND OVER-  
FULFILLED ITS ECONOMIC PLANS. TO ILLUSTRATE THE STATEMENT,  
HE MENTIONED THAT THE CURRENT FIVE-YEAR PLAN HAD FORESEEN  
THE CONSTRUCTION OF HALF A MILLION APARTMENTS AND THAT THIS  
GOAL HAD BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF THE PLAN.  
THE 1976-80 PLAN FORESAW THE CONSTRUCTION OF 750,000  
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APARTMENTS. REFERRING TO AGRICULTURAL PROGRESS,  
ABRASIMOV NOTED THAT GRAIN YIELDS PER HECTARE HAD BEEN  
BELOW 30 DECITONS WHEN HE LEFT BERLIN IN 1971 AND  
THAT IN THE LAST CROP YEAR YIELDS HAD APPROACHED 40  
DECITONS. HE SAID, SMILING, THAT THIS PROGRESS WAS  
PROBABLY DUE TO HIS ABSENCE FROM BERLIN.

8. ABRASIMOV EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE COULD MEET  
OFTEN TO DISCUSS ISSUES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET  
UNION AND WORK TOGETHER FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR  
MUTUAL RELATIONS. I SAID THAT I WOULD BE GLAD TO DO THIS  
AND TOLD HIM THAT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL ALSO  
IF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE STAFFS OF THE TWO EMBASSIES  
COULD BE IMPROVED. HE RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO THIS  
SUGGESTION. HE MENTIONED THE PROGRESS BEING MADE AT  
CSCE AND THE SOVIET HOPE THAT THE TALKS COULD BE  
COMPLETED BY JUNE 30. ABRASIMOV ALSO REFERRED TO SOVIET  
HOPES FOR AN AGREEMENT COMING OUT OF THE SALT II,  
AGREEING WITH ME THAT THE CONTROL AND REDUCTION OF  
NUCLEAR ARMS WERE OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE. HE CALLED  
ATTENTION TO BREZHNEV'S MARCH 17 SPEECH IN BUDAPEST, IN  
WHICH THE GENERAL SECRETARY HAD EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE  
OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH  
THE U.S. HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE PROBLEMS IN

OUR RELATIONS, BUT PROVIDING THAT GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND USSR OBTAIN, ABRASIMOV ASSERTED ANY REGIONAL PROBLEMS COULD REMAIN LOCALIZED AND ALSO BE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE OF RESOLUTION.

9. COMMENT: THE MEETING WAS CORRECT AND FRIENDLY. I KNOW THAT I SET ABRASIMOV STRAIGHT REGARDING THE FACT THAT I HAVE NO JURISDICTION REGARDING THE Q.A. AND BERLIN MATTERS AND THAT MY COLLEAGUE IN BONN IS HIS APPROPRIATE PARTNER IN DISCUSSING MATTERS RELATING TO BERLIN OR THE APPLICATION OF THE Q.A., TELLING HIM "AS YOU WELL KNOW". I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS NOT SURPRISED BY MY REFUSAL TO BE DRAWN INTO DISCUSSIONS OF BERLIN OR QA MATTERS, BUT IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT HE MADE HIS INITIATIVE AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF OUR TALKS. JUDGING FROM HIS REMARKS, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT ONE OF HIS PRIMARY TASKS WILL BE TO WATCH  
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DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST BERLIN AND THAT HIS TACTIC AT FIRST MIGHT BE TO APPEAL TO HIS WESTERN COLLEAGUES TO DEFEND THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE QA, AS INTERPRETED BY THE SOVIET UNION, FROM BEING UNDERMINED BY FRG ACTIVITIES AND MAY ABSTAIN FROM ANY FRONTAL ASSAULT ON THE 3 WESTERN ALLIES. BECAUSE OF HIS CONTINUED REFERENCES THE ALLIES SHOULD CONSIDER THAT HE WILL TAKE A RESTRICTIVE POSITION ON WEST BERLIN DEVELOPMENTS.

10. I FOUND ABRASIMOV RATHER CAUTIOUS AT THE OUTSET OF OUR CONVERSATION, BUT HE BECAME MORE ANIMATED AS IT WENT ALONG. ALTHOUGH HE BEGAN BY REFERRING TO THE IMPORTANCE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, HE WAS NOT AS DEMONSTRATIVE AS YEFREMOV OR HONECKER REGARDING THE NECESSITY FOR STRONG US-SOVIET BONDS. DISTINGUISHED AND DIGNIFIED, AT FIRST IMPRESSION AT LEAST. HE CONFIRMS THE REPORTS AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY OF AN ABLE, ASTUTE, SUBTLE AND STRONG REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS COUNTRY. HE ALSO DEMONSTRATED A PERSONAL TOUCH BY SPEAKING WARMLY OF HIS CONTACTS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AND HIS ASSOCIATION WITH AMBASSADORS RUSH AND STOESSEL. REFERRING TO HIS BRIEF STINT IN PARIS AS AMBASSADOR, ABRASIMOV SAID, ONLY HALF JOKINGLY, THAT HE WOULD HAVE EXTENDED HIS TOUR THERE HAD HE KNOWN THAT HIS OLD NEGOTIATING PARTNERS, RUSH AND SAUVAGNARGUES, WOULD ALSO BE STATIONED THERE. COOPER

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, PGOV, US, UR, GC, GE, (ABRASIMOV, PYOTR)  
**To:** STATE  
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